



The Amesbury Beat

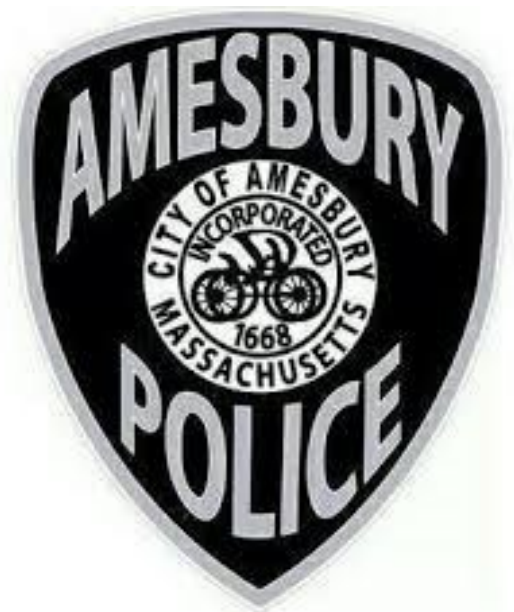
By: Officer Tom Hanshaw

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We have started a new year and it's now officially winter in New England. I'm sure you've heard it before but being prepared for what Mother Nature sends our way is a must for all. Monitoring weather forecasts is the start, catch a weather report each day so you know if a storm is coming. Although an impending nor'easter can receive a lot of hype, it's better to be ready than not. Keeping your car's gas tank at least half full, having some extra non-perishable food and medication at the house, plenty of batteries and a fully charged cell phone are easy ways to be ready.

It is likely power will be lost during a severe storm; plan to be without electricity for an extended time until crews can get it restored. Quite often repairs cannot begin until conditions improve and it's safe for crews. Many residents have opted to install generators to assure the juice keeps flowing; if you have one fueled with gasoline or kerosene, be sure it's not too close to your home. Many people have medical equipment, which requires power; don't wait until power is lost, have a contingency plan in place.

Our streets and highways require a lot of attention during a storm, please let crews do their job and stay off the road unless absolutely necessary. Many communities have parking bans and will declare a snow emergency during a big storm, prohibiting on street parking. Monitor local announcements and avoid calling police or fire departments unless there's an emergency. Spring will be here before we know it but having patience until then is something New Englanders are pretty good at.



As I looked back last week in my column, this week is a time to look forward, welcoming the year, 2019. In fact, this will be my 6th year writing with the Daily News as The Amesbury Beat debuted on January 3, 2014. Thankfully, the Daily News graciously offered to provide space after the Amesbury News ceased publication at the end of 2013, where I began providing crime prevention tips in 1996. While no one really knows what tomorrow will bring, we typically use this time of year to prepare programs for the spring and summer. It's tough to schedule events during the winter as the weather can wreak havoc on plans. I'm excited to say that we are bringing back the Bike Safety Day this spring, with the support of the Amesbury Rotary Club. The Rotary Club contacted me last fall with the idea and Chief Scholtz immediately signed us up.

In closing, the upcoming year will be a special one for me as I will be retiring in July. I began my career with the Auxiliary Force in 1983 and became a permanent officer in 1987, so I have reached the eligible combination of service and age. Over the next few months I will reflecting back, continuing to provide tips and updating you on department news. I am happy to say that Chief Scholtz and Lt. Bailey are committed to community policing and we have already recruited several department members to continue this important work. I also want to reassure everyone that I'll still be a visible part of the community, surely working on a number of efforts.

